

"EUMENES is reckoned among the notable examples of fortune's mutability; but more notable was his government of himself, in all her changes. Adversity never lessened his courage, nor prosperity his circumspection. But all his virtue, industry, and wit were cast away, in leading an army, without full power to keep it in due obedience. Therefore it was not ill answered, by Gaspard de Collignie, Admiral of France, in our days, to one that foretold his death, which ensued soon after in the massacre of Paris; 'that, rather than to lead again an army of VOLUNTARIES, he would die a thousand times.'" — Sir Walter Raleigh's History, Vol. II. p. 211.

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VOLUNTEER SYSTEM.

SIR,—After the numerous and decisive facts which you have laid before the public, in refutation of that most modest assertion of Mr. Hiley Addington, viz. "that the corps alluded to by Mr. Windham as being under the control of a committee, was a solitary instance of the kind;" it may appear almost superfluous to adduce any further evidence in confirmation of a fact, which unfortunately is but too well attested. But as the Right Hon. Gentleman (to whatever cause it may be owing, whether it arises from his mistaking an obstinate adherence to error, for manly firmness and resolution; or perhaps, from a certain dulness of intellect) appears to require an accumulation of proof; I will beg leave to introduce to his notice, another example of a corps, which is governed by a committee. Be it known, therefore, to "the Right Hon. Relation," and all others whom it may concern, that the Oxford Loyal Volunteers, commanded by Sir Digby Mackworth, are likewise subject to the superintending care of a Committee. It will readily be supposed that it is impossible for me to procure a copy of their resolutions; I will, however, state a few facts relative to the powers, and mode of election of the Committee, which I think will prove interesting to your readers. First, then, the Committee consists of two delegates from each company, who are elected by the privates. 2. The majority of the Committee consists of privates. 3. The Committee is re-elected every six weeks. This Committee has the superintendence and management of the affairs of the corps: and how far its authority extends, may be easily conjectured from the following circumstance. The colonel, sometime since, anxious to render his men as perfect as possible in discipline, wished the corps to devote two or three mornings in a week to this purpose. To this measure the privates were very averse, and accordingly directed the Committee to remonstrate with Sir Digby Mackworth against it; and the consequence of course was, that the plan was relinquished. Another most sin-

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gular, and I should hope, unprecedented power vested in this Committee is, the right of hearing and deciding on the complaints alleged by the privates against their officers. When it is recollected that the majority of this Committee consists of privates, the consequences attending such a regulation, may be easily appreciated.—It is stated, from the highest authority, that it never was intended that the Volunteers should possess the right of filling up any vacancies that might occur among the officers, after the corps had been once established. If this, Sir, be the intention of Government, our Oxford Volunteers have been in the constant habit of violating it. With them, all vacancies which occur among the officers, are invariably filled up by persons elected by the privates. This election is managed in a way somewhat singular. When a vacancy happens in any of the companies, one should naturally suppose that the power of filling it up, would (in case of an election) exclusively belong to the individuals of whom the company was composed. This, however, is not the case. On the contrary, every individual in the regiment has a vote on this occasion. In short, it would be difficult to find a corps, the constitution of which is more purely democratic. Accordingly it has been exultingly said, by some of the lower sort of privates, that in their corps every man has a voice. Their boasting, however, is pretty nearly at an end. For I cannot for a moment suppose, that their Colonel will so far forget the duty he owes to his Sovereign and his Country, as to permit, for the future, what has been publicly declared, to be contrary to his Majesty's intention.—I am, Sir, with the sincerest esteem, yours, &c.

PHILO PATRIÆ.

Oxford, Jan. 26, 1804.

Bristol, Jan. 24, 1804.

SIR,—When a man pushes himself forward to instruct and inform the public, and still more when he becomes an accuser; the least that is expected of him is to give a full and fair representation of what he re-

lates. It is because your correspondent J. O. has failed in both these requisites in his account of a fracas that happened some time since, in the corps of Light Horse Volunteers of this city, that I claim a small portion of your publication, to give a plain but brief statement of that dispute, which did not originate with those to whom the blame is attributed; neither in its progress did any thing transpire which could justify a charge against them of having violated the regulation under which they associated.

—After the corps was formed, and the officers appointed, it was thought necessary to have a Major Commandant; this the senior captain strenuously opposed, unless he could be appointed, on the ground that it was unmilitary to put any body over his head. Here the dispute began and a great deal of ill-blood arose between the friends of the captain and the advocates for the rights of the corps. And here it will not be amiss to tell you that a committee, consisting of one commissioned officer and four privates from each troop, has the complete command, both civil and military. This committee, of which the senior captain was chairman, framed a sort of constitution, or form of government, not taken from the pigeon holes of the Abby Seyes, but copied from the regulations of the London and Westminster L. H. V. By this the right of choosing officers is vested in the body at large, and any private may be elected to fill a vacant situation. In virtue of this claim, a gentleman of great respectability, but whose modesty had hitherto kept him in the ranks, was nominated at a general meeting called by the chairman of the committee, at the requisition of several members, as a fit person to be appointed Major Commandant. The nomination was carried unanimously. A few days after this, the Major sent a note to the committee, stating that difficulties having been raised to his appointment he felt himself bound to resign. Upon this two-thirds of the men resigned, until the senior captain, who was regarded as the cause of the majors' resignation, thought proper himself to resign. Here the dispute ended. The seceders rejoined, another major and another captain were appointed (by the men and not by the committee) and the corps has never failed to perform any duty required of it, from the time H. R. H. the Duke of Cumberland, ordered a detachment to escort French prisoners from Wells; in which service the men were absent two days, and on horseback twelve hours without dismounting; this they did cheerfully several times, and now two men act as videttes every day at

the French prison. All this I admit they promised his Royal Highness to do, but it was more than the terms of service required; and I only notice it to shew that no "pledge was forfeited," to prove that these men acted up to the letter and spirit of their engagement. It would be as reasonable to expect the members of the House of Commons to abandon the liberty of speech, or any other privilege they derive from the constitution, as to call upon the members of volunteer corps to give up the rights they enjoy under their internal regulations, which have been sanctioned by an act of the legislature. Whatever is wrong is a necessary consequence of the defects of the volunteer system. It has already produced many inconveniences, and the dangers which it threatens are more than enough to terrify the stoutest heart. In every word and sentiment you have published on that subject, I most perfectly coincide.

I am, Sir,
A CITIZEN SOLDIER
Of the Lath and Plaster Army.

Lanarkshire, Jan. 6, 1804.

SIR,—I read your paper with a great deal of pleasure, as I deem you sincerely attached to truth, and to the true interests of your King and Country. A similar attachment leads me to state to you a late occurrence at L——, which is no bad illustration of your opinion of the Volunteer System.—On Friday, the 16th of December, 1803, as two or three town's-people, one of them a member of the Common Council of the Borough, were met together in a public-house, two of the L—— Volunteers intruded into their company, which occasioned some altercation, ending in blows from the volunteers, to the effusion of blood and the loss of a tooth to the Borough Councillor. The constables came to carry the delinquents before a magistrate; but were much obstructed by the volunteers, now assisted by others of the corps; and afterwards, while one of them was carrying to prison by order of a magistrate, the constables were actually deforced in their duty, beat, and abused, and the prisoner set at liberty:—nay, it is said, one of the volunteer officers joined in the deforcement, insisting that a volunteer could only be tried by a court martial, and was not subject to the civil power; and some of them even threatened the magistrate, with the vengeance of their Major Commandant. A serjeant, too, ran to a room where some of the volunteers were drilling, remonstrating why they remained there, while one of their number was carrying to

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prison!—Now, Sir, I tremble for the result of such doctrine and practice!—If the civil power is allowed to be trampled upon by the volunteers with impunity, and without investigation, the consequence must be serious indeed.—I am, Sir, yours, &c.
A HIGHLANDER.

E—ll, Surrey, Jan. 30, 1804.

SIR,—Permit me to ask for a corner in your paper, in order to convey to the public some account of the Volunteer-corps of this place. It consisted of 139 men, to whom, about four months ago, the oath of allegiance was tendered; but, it was generally, if not wholly, refused. A set of regulations was afterwards submitted to the corps, who, thereupon threw up, with the exception of 35 men. They paraded the place in great triumph, with blue cockades, and threw their regimentals, with great contempt, into the house of a man, who had originally subscribed 50l. towards clothing and disciplining them! Are *these* the men, Mr. Cobbett; is *this* the description of troops, to meet and to defeat the veterans of France? Is it thus that we are to be saved, Sir? I was, myself, some time ago much in favour of the volunteer system; and, I must confess, that even your arguments were not sufficient to correct me without the aid of experience. That experience I have now had; and, with you, Sir, and, I believe, with ninety-nine hundredths of the nation, I say, “short follies are best;” away with this foolery, and give us a real army in its stead.—I am, yours, &c. &c.
C. S.

Extract from Proceedings of a Parish Meeting in the Parish of Mary-la-bonne, dated Jan. 7, 1804, and signed by JOHN JONES, Clerk.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY, that the following address to the nobility, gentry, and other inhabitants of this parish, be printed and distributed, relative to the ROYAL YORK MARY-LA-BONNE VOLUNTEERS.—The Volunteer Association in this parish having been brought to its present state of discipline, at an expense of not less than twenty thousand pounds to the individuals who compose that corps, exclusive of their annual subscription towards its support, and the incidental expenses they must necessarily be put unto, besides the time given from their several occupations in personally attending their duty.—And that the aid of Volunteer Corps is requisite at this perilous time to our safety and preservation from a menacing ferocious enemy, who threatens our entire destruction and existence as a people and na-

tion is not disputed; yet as *their* annual expense cannot be supported without the aid and subscription of those whose situation precludes personal service, and upon whom *their continuance must depend*, you will be waited upon by a Committee of vestrymen and parishioners, attended by an officer of the Royal York Mary-la-bonne Volunteers, who have undertaken to solicit your subscription for that purpose, so long only as it may be found necessary and expedient to continue the services of those who have so nobly volunteered to support the freedom of our country, protect our property, and defend our lives at the peril and hazard of their own.

Extract from an Address to the Members of the North East Division of the Artillery Company, from the Captain of the said Division, dated Angel Court, January 28, 1804.

GENTLEMEN,—Wednesday next is the day appointed for the inspection of the regiment.—It is painful to me to observe that the musters of the North East Division have of late done no credit to its members.—I appeal to your feelings, as men, to your honour, as soldiers, whether the members of the North East Division have not of late been too relax in the performance of their duty; government has seen and noticed this relaxation, and the feelings of your Colonel have suffered much upon the occasion. Let me entreat you then, as friends, to muster strong on Wednesday next.—The Honourable Artillery Company have till now stood high in the estimation of government: their punctual attendance on all pressing occasions has merited and obtained universal approbation. Rouse then, my brave comrades, retrieve your good name, and be emulous to rank foremost in the list of volunteers. The occasion was never more pressing; your exertions were never more required. I confidently hope that this address will meet with the sanction of the whole division.—Believe me, Gentlemen, most sincerely your devoted servant,

THOMAS DAWES, Captain.

Copy of a Letter from a CORPORAL of a Volunteer Corps, in the City of Westminster, to HIS COLONEL, dated January 25, 1804.

SIR,—I'me desired by the several privates in my company, to acquaint you, that it is their determination to withdraw themselves, unless you immediately order **** [a captain] to resign—He may bless his stars, I did not bayonet him—but—dam him I've done with him—Yours to command
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✂ The reader may depend on the authen-

ticity of this document. I have the names of all the parties; but, it is useless to mention them. It is the facts and not the persons that I wish to hold up to the notice of my readers. — EDITOR.

CHANGE OF MINISTRY.

SIR, — I sincerely congratulate you, or more correctly speaking, the public, on the increased circulation that you announced at the beginning of the year of your patriotic publication; and am glad you have so very easy a mode of silencing ministerial cavillers respecting the truth of your statement; by referring them to the Stamp Office. I have taken in the Register for the last twelve months, and am sure it is not your fault, if the people of England are not, by this time, not only fully acquainted with their real situation, but also with the only practical means that can afford a rational hope of surmounting the complication of ills which menace our destruction. I trust you will continue boldly and independently to urge the important truths you have already brought forward, so as, if possible, to awaken the nation from its besotted apathy respecting the present imbecile administration: who have so largely contributed to our present dangers, and whose continuance in power renders our deliverance next to utter impossibility.

You have lately pointed out, in a most forcible manner, the indispensable necessity of an union of parties; such as will enable his Majesty to avail himself, for the safety, honour, and dignity of the country, of all the energy that can be derived from a combination of the most consummate wisdom and powerful influence. Besides, your own conclusive reasoning on the subject, you have laudably shown your devotion to the interests of your country, by giving additional publicity to two very luminous essays on the subject of *coalition*, which lately appeared in a daily paper. It is natural enough, indisputably, for our present ministers to feel exquisitely sensitive, when a coalition of great and enlightened men is spoken of; for certainly there can be no such thing as an Addington in the composition. When you mention the names of my Lord Grenville, Messrs. Windham, Pitt and Fox, you only re-echo the sentiment expressed throughout the kingdom by all intelligent and disinterested persons; the only question being how the union of so much talent and influence can happily for the country, be brought into action. I hope it will be imputed to me, that I presume

to take measure of the ability contained in the country; or that I consider these gentlemen to be exclusively possessed of distinguished talent; or even take upon me to decide, that, their abilities are unequalled. It is sufficient for my purpose, to refer to them, as known, able, leading men, who, collectively, would be able to call forth into the service of their country, at this season of unexampled difficulty, all the physical strength and mental energy it contains.

And now, Sir, will you permit me to state, as the result of most serious reflection, that greatly as I admire the splendid genius of Mr. Pitt, his coalition with the gentlemen I have named, but on conditions, which, I fear, would be rather mortifying to him, and which I much wish he may so far master himself as to accede to, would, instead of proving an acquisition, only add to our embarrassment. From Mr. Pitt, I should demand as a preliminary, the complete renunciation of the system he has pursued for some years, relative to finance; and, especially, with regard to the Bank of England: for, until the unnatural and disgraceful restriction be removed from the latter, we cannot even begin the work of political salvation. I implore the weight and eloquence of this gentleman, with the public; not to add to the hideous fabric of our paper credit; not to attempt any longer, the delusive and deleterious quackery of sustaining the overgrown size of the national debt, by additional taxes; but, to employ all his credit, all his skill, all his persuasion, in honestly co-operating with the great leaders I have named, in the best, which in truth will be the *speediest* plan, by which its reduction can be effected, in such proportion as to bring the payment of the interests within the compass of a natural, legitimate system of taxation. But how is this great desideratum to be performed? By no other possible method, I dare venture solemnly to aver, than positive and adequate taxation of the interest, which is the same thing as reducing the principal of the debt itself. But this is, at once, to acknowledge national bankruptcy. To be sure it is; and I wish the commission to be sued out, that the creditors may have all that they are entitled to; namely, an annuity from the public, of all that a rich commercial people can pay in such taxes, as are compatible with due encouragement to industry, freedom, and morality. If it be contended, that the national creditor has claims to sanction unlimited taxation, or in other words, unlimited oppression and extortion; I can only consign such claims to the indistinguishable

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ruin, that must soon equally overwhelm both creditor and debtor.

In expressing the foregoing sentiments about our finances, in which, I flatter myself, Sir, you yourself concur; I disclaim, entirely, any insinuation that they are consonant with those entertained by the distinguished characters, I have previously named, nor do I know the contrary. To them it belongs, when, and in what manner, they deem most fit, to promulgate their own.

I am willing to do all the justice to Mr. Pitt that he can claim, for his comprehensive knowledge and arrangement of finance. The whole country must be strikingly convinced of the bungling inferiority of his successor; aided, as he has been, by Mr. Tierney; who, it is presumed, has been indefatigable at the desk, as his master has dispensed with his loquacity for some time past in St. Stephen's Chapel. The property tax, as it is called, will be a monument of the stupidity of the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, and of his deputy; as well as of their disregard of public feeling. This disgraceful farrago is as abominable as it is unintelligible; and, I believe, I may add, impracticable, in its present crude state. Before I conclude, it is my intention to point out some of the effects of the *tried* part of the Doctor's budget; but I shall take leave of his insignificance for the present, while I entreat a little more of your attention respecting Mr. Pitt. When that gentleman came first into power, his system of finance was decided, manly, and honest. He deservedly obtained credit with the country, by the extensive, as well as rapid improvement of the revenue, which he effected; and which, be it remembered, was essentially owing to his substituting low duties, in the room of those which experience had demonstrated, either to have the effect of sumptuary laws, or, what was much worse, to produce counteraction, from the encouragement afforded to illicit practices. In an evil hour, Mr. Pitt abandoned his own system, and began the work of destroying the fruit derived from several years of persevering labour and sound wisdom. *Hinc prima mali labes.* I shall shew you the baneful consequences, for they are now severely felt of this dereliction, as they arise out of the clumsy imitation of our late premier, by his successor.

In your analysis some time ago, of the vaunted, but deceptive surplus of revenue proclaimed by the minister, you have most pointedly detected the fallacy of reckoning upon new taxes, as additional revenue, when there is a consequent decrease of those already existing. What matters it to the

revenue, whether I pay a certain sum for drinking wine, or the same amount as a proportion of my income, if I am unable to pay altogether any more than the sum in question? The retroactive effect must always arrive, when you have exhausted all the natural objects of taxation, and I must frankly declare, that with all my admiration of Mr. Pitt, and deference to his political, as well as financial sagacity, even superadding existing circumstances of acknowledged difficulty that he has had to contend with; he never was justified in breaking down the natural barrier. I have no objection to concede to him purity of intention; but, as he has not established any claim to infallibility, let him now exhibit his pretensions to sincerity and candour. The man, who, in the prosecution (if he claims such concession, I readily grant it) of the best cause, has by his fascinating eloquence, and persuasion, led us to the brink of that precipice, from which, to use his own emphatical words, we can behold nothing but the "gulph of bankruptcy" ready to devour us; can only merit the reputation of a true patriot, by exerting his utmost power, and making every personal sacrifice, to reconduct us to safe ground. Mr. Pitt has changed his opinions on one measure, to which he had as firmly pledged himself, as he can have done to any other. I mean, *parliamentary reform*; but such questions, as well as the distinctions of Whig and Tory, I would, for the present, consign to oblivion, as obsolete terms. I call upon Fox, Pitt, Windham, and Grenville, in the name of imperious necessity, to lay aside speculative points, and party differences, and assist by their united wisdom and patriotism, in preventing the subversion of the monarchy, and the downfall of the British constitution. I say in the name of imperious necessity, in the name of all that is dear to us, in the name of our common country, "*pro quâ quis bonus dubitet mortem offerere, si ei sit profuturus?*" I call upon them to unite their efforts, to save us by timely precautions, from the anarchy and desolation, that exactly similar causes with those we now labour under, have furnished so frightful an example of in France. From the same fate, nothing but an extinction of part of the national debt, and the consequent repeal of the taxes that either clog our industry, or impair the energy of a free people, can save us in the impending crisis. Believe me, Sir, it will soon be found, that without the radical amelioration I have just suggested, our volunteers will prove equally unwilling and unable to support themselves; and

what consequences may thence be expected, I shall not impute to your readers so much dulness of intellect as not to foresee; or so little feeling, as not to shudder at. I am very free to acknowledge, for myself, that I do not feel the apprehension of any thing like immediate danger from the arms of the enemy. It is only when I look back on the gigantic monster, that hangs on our rear, that I feel dismay. My courage all fails, my soul sinks within me at the frightful load of debt, and grinding inquisitorial taxes, by which our sapient statesmen are destroying us, while, poor creatures, they vainly imagine they can frighten Buonaparté! If the latter is as frantic as some choose to call him; if he is, what I do not myself believe a word of, as weak and superficial as ministers themselves, perhaps, his impatience may hurry him on in the threatened invasion, instead of making sure work of it, by leaving our overthrow to the operation of their own destructive measures.

When our paper is virtually at a discount, as you have demonstratively proved, by the price at which the dollars are now current; and which, indeed, has long been incontestibly shewn by the progressive advance in the price of gold and silver, as well as by the unfavourable course of exchange with the Continent, though the amount of our exports, far exceeded that of our imports; surely it will not be contended, that it is not high time to throw aside disguise, and institute an impartial enquiry into the real state of the nation.

I have so far confined myself, in a great degree, to a sort of expostulatory address to Mr. Pitt. Although that gentleman has lately acted in a manner, both in the opinion of his friends and opponents, so little worthy of himself; I own, without coinciding entirely with him in politics, that there has always appeared to me something dignified, elevated, and commanding in his character. With respect to the other gentlemen, I have named, as leading characters, it does not occur to me, that they are materially called upon either to give any pledge for the future, or offer any apology for the past. To Mr. Fox, with great deference, I would, however unwillingly, beg leave to offer a few remarks. It certainly would be the greatest injustice to my own sentiment, as well, I presume, as to the general estimation, in which he is held in this country, and throughout Europe, to deny him the rare qualification of an enlightened, indeed, consummate statesman. I will frankly, however own, that, attached, like himself to peace, from motives of philanthropy; his

bias in its favour, has lately appeared stronger than was consistent with the accomplishment of his own object; which I have no hesitation in saying, I think the system of Lord Grenville and Mr. Windham, at present more securely leads to. I shall not take any retrospective view, to prove whether he, or they, on former occasions, urged the wisest course. Mr. Fox has lately, very forcibly reminded me of the sentiment of Cicero "*Pacem iniquissimam bello justissimam antefero.*" From him, I would most earnestly deprecate any thing resembling the repetition of the hollow peace of Amiens. War, I say war with France, and I confess the alternative is horrible, as long as this country can exist as independent, or until the intolerable aggrandizement of the former, be reduced within bounds, compatible with the safety and quiet of Great Britain; or, I may say, of the rest of Europe; with whose tranquillity, our own must, in a greater or lesser degree, be indissolubly connected. Beyond this point I hope neither British courage, or British capital will be pushed. France I would deprive of nothing, but what is repugnant to her own true interest and happiness, as well as to the general welfare of mankind. May the long rivalry of the two nations cease, and the generous contest commence between them of improving the condition of humanity, by the diffusion of science, and extension of agriculture and commerce.

I must now revert to the subject, which I intimated in another part of my letter; I mean Mr. Addington's maiden budget. I recollect that it was greatly extolled by some venal scribblers, for its possessing, at once, undoubted efficiency, and the greatest simplicity. The latter term, in one acceptation, will certainly apply to this, as well as all other measures of any importance, brought forward by this gentleman. Such experiments in finance, I persuade myself, will bear me out in my general train of reasoning. I mean to infer from them, that however much you rack invention, however much you vary the nominal amount of imposts, or whatever diversity of objects you select, there must still remain a limit to the extension of revenue. If, therefore, according to all reasonable criterion, we have reached the *ne plus ultra*, what does sound policy dictate? Why, certainly the extinction of part of the debt, instead of the creation of vexatious, galling taxes, which oppressive as they are, must cease to improve the whole stock of revenue. I am not unapprised of the danger that might be apprehended from the measure I venture to

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recommend. History bears ample testimony to the revolutions and convulsions occasioned by financial dilapidations; and the example of France is now before our eyes. The attempt under the direction of our present set of feeble creatures, I should consider the signal of irretrievable confusion and calamity; while, under the auspices of such an administration as I have named some of the leaders of, men, uniting all parties, and possessing unlimited confidence with the public; the measure would be as practicable, as it certainly is *indispensable*: and the only question is, whether, by putting the reins of government, before it be too late, into able hands, we may be fully prepared, by timely precaution, or wait till the gathering storm suddenly burst over us, and scatter ruin and devastation in every direction.

As a prominent feature of Mr. Addington's budget, stood the additional duty on tea. From indisputable authority, at the East-India House, I learn, that in the last March sale, there was sold of this article 7,400,000 lbs. weight; and that such has been already the effect of the high duty, as to have reduced the quantity declared for sale in March ensuing, to 4,700,000 lbs. only; which, it appears, is very considerably less than has been sold at any one sale, for many years past. In addition to the loss sustained, by so diminished a sale, I understand, that a depreciation has taken place of such a nature as to threaten very serious and important consequences to the East-India Company; to whom this article, if I am rightly informed, has, for some time past, been an essential, as well as very improving resource. In point of revenue, the inference is too palpable. The tax is levied upon tea *ad valorem*, and there seems every reason to apprehend, that, combining depreciation with reduced quantity, there will very soon be a less sum produced at the present monstrous duty of 95 per cent. than the preceding duty of only 50 per cent. afforded. This tax, it appears, was very obstinately persisted in, against the most cogent reasons and forcible representations urged by the chairman and court of directors of the East-India Company, on their own behalf; and by a very numerous body of traders, in behalf of themselves and the community; under a conviction, from former experience, that the excessive duty would prove equally injurious to themselves and to the revenue.

The next striking object in the ways and means was the additional duty on spirituous liquors. On advertent to the commence-

ment of Mr. Pitt's administration, it will be found, that he reduced the duty on rum from about 7s. 6d. per gallon to 4s.; and on French brandy and Dutch geneva, from about 9s. 6d. to 5s. per gallon; and that, however extraordinary it may appear, the event not only justified the sanguine expectations he held out to the public, of augmenting the revenue, by the low duties, but as it should appear, from what I have been informed, in a few years, rendered it, almost beyond all comparison, more productive. Unfortunately, Mr. Pitt was induced, during the war, to gradually raise the duty on these articles to their former limit; and thus restore the exploded system of his predecessor, in the American war. But now steps forward the modern hero of finance, Doctor Addington! bravely asserting his entire superiority over common sense and experience; he offers you a large additional supply *on paper*, by at once raising the duty on brandy and geneva to about 14s.; and on rum to about 11s. per gallon. From some highly respectable persons in the West-India trade, I am positively assured, that such has been the consequence of this exorbitant duty, that it may be presumed on a very moderate calculation, that the article of rum, to the loss of the planter, is sunk full half in price; occasioned, partly, by the want of internal consumption in this country, and, partly, by the large proportion of British spirit, mixed with it, in order to counteract the high duty. The spirituous liquors of France and Holland, they inform me, still experience a much greater diminution of consumption, from the high duty; and hence greater defalcation of revenue. I will not pursue, as I might do, the investigation of the Doctor's flimsy budget any further. I have said enough to render the conclusion level to the capacity of all men of common understanding: it is to such, and not to his Majesty's ministers, that I address myself.

I shall conclude with a very few observations on a subject, that the selfish crew, who have usurped the places of their betters, ridiculously enough, endeavour to make a question of such extreme delicacy, something, indeed, so wonderfully mysterious, as to render the mere mention of it, a kind of profanation; a new sort of political crime: I mean, the undoubted, and I will add, most beneficial prerogative of his majesty; the power of appointing his own ministers, who questions the authority by which Mr. Addington is become the minister? But what practical benefit they mean to derive from such an argument, as their

enjoying undeserved favour from their sovereign, is incomprehensible, unless it be contended, because their incapacity, ignorance, and unfitness for the high stations they hold, is unprecedented; an unprecedented extension of the royal prerogative should take place, in order to protect them from the consequences of responsibility to the public. I have only very shortly to reply to such profound reasoners on our constitution, that it is the bounden duty of the subjects of our most gracious monarch, in a constitutional and proper manner to convey the full expression of the public opinion, respecting those servants, whom he chooses to entrust with the maintenance of the honour and glory of the crown, and the inseparable welfare and happiness of his people. After this short exposition, I will leave to others all the metaphysical disquisition they choose to display on this point, while, with implicit confidence, in common, I trust, with every loyal man, I may rely on such practical use of prerogative as becomes the father of his people, and the most virtuous and religious King in Europe.

When I reflect on the state of our finances; the situation of Ireland, from which the present ministers have pledged themselves to withhold the only remedy, by which it can be rendered a sound part of the empire; when I turn my eyes to the Continent, and cannot find a single power that dare risk a common cause with such a set of drivellers; when I again turn them towards home, and behold the skeleton of a regular army, and the incurably defective system of our volunteer force; and, lastly, when I contemplate the formidable strength, skill, perseverance, and implacability of our inveterate enemy; I certainly wonder that there can be two opinions respecting the absolute necessity of a change of ministers. The Englishman, who denies such necessity, may think and speak of me as he thinks proper; but, he must, if he pleases, excuse me, if, in return, he is only offered the choice of being considered either a fool or traitor to his king and country by, Sir, yours, &c.

January 31, 1804.

VERAX.

DOMESTIC OFFICIAL PAPER.

Circular Letter from the Secretary of State to the several Lord Lieutenants of Counties.—Dated Whitehall, Jan. 16.

MY LORD,—Referring your lordship to the directions contained in my Circular Letter to you, of the 31st of Oct. last, for the removal, in cases of emergency, or render-

ing useless, if needs be, such horses, draught cattle, and carriages, as shall not be wanted for the purposes therein mentioned; I am to desire, that your lordship will consider in every respect, as included in those directions, all such vessels, boats, or craft, as shall not be wanted for the like purposes, or shall not be armed and equipped for the annoyance of the enemy.—As I am informed by H. R. H. the Commander in Chief, that only one light cart per company can, on such emergency, be allowed to volunteer corps, for carrying their camp kettles and necessaries on their march, I beg leave to recommend it to your lordship, to give directions that one such cart be allotted before-hand to each company of volunteers with the County of ———; and that one such cart be always kept marked and numbered, as the carriage intended for the use of that particular company for this service.—In consequence also of a late suggestion from H. R. H. the Commander in Chief, I have strongly to recommend to your lordship, in communication with the general commanding the district in which the County of ——— is included, to give directions for allotting and marking a sufficient number of waggons for moving the volunteer force where it is not placed in the vicinity of the coast; and it would be found extremely useful, if boards, such as are used for seats in market-carts, could be provided and kept in readiness, at the place or places of general assembly, ready to be slung upon the waggons, to which place of assembly these waggons should be held bound to repair upon the signal of alarm being given.—I have the honour to be, my lord, &c.

C. YORKE.

INTELLIGENCE.

FOREIGN.—According to late accounts from the East-Indies, it appears, that, in consequence of a League formed between Holkar, Scindea, Boonslah, and some other Mahratta Princes, for the purpose of compelling the Nizam to break off all connexion with the English, Holkar had entered the Nizam's territory in the district of Aurangabad, taken the city, and imposed a contribution on the inhabitants: thence he intended to advance to Nundeyr and Hyderabad; and the Nizam had, accordingly, applied for the recall of the troops under Gen. Wellesley.—It appears that the Grand Signior has now finally agreed to the arrangement recently made with the Beys of Egypt, which, it is said contains some stipulations more favourable to his interests in

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that country, than the one formerly in force.

—Mr. Drummond, the English Ambassador has certainly left Constantinople, on his return: previous to his departure, however, he had a private audience with the Grand Signior and Grand Vizier, in presence of the Reis Effendi, Minister for Foreign Affairs.

—For some time past considerable apprehensions have prevailed among the Spaniards, of an immediate rupture with Great-Britain; and the English residing in Spain consider the war as inevitable. A letter has been written by direction of Mr. Frere, the British Minister at the Court of Madrid, "recommending all his Majesty's subjects in that kingdom, to take such precautions as they may deem advisable in the event of a rupture between the two countries."—Gen. Lasnes, the French Minister at Lisbon, lately had a disagreement with the Portuguese Secretary of State, and some fears were entertained lest Portugal would be driven from her pacific posture: these fears, however, have subsided, and such explanations have been given as to satisfy Gen. Lasnes.—On the 15th of January, Buonaparté presented to the Legislative Body of France, the annual "*Exposé* of the situation of the Republic." It is couched in terms of dignified moderation, and exhibits an ample picture of the prosperity and happiness of the country. The Legislative Body is now engaged in the discussion of the new Civil Code.—No official accounts of the surrender of the French troops in St. Domingo to the arms of his Britannic Majesty have yet been communicated to the public by the British Government; but letters have been received from persons on board the squadron to which they surrendered, stating that Gen. Rochambeau, reduced to the last extremity, and unable to make any further opposition, made overtures to the British commander. The surrender was unconditional, and besides about five thousand prisoners, a large quantity of specie, and four frigates, two corvettes, and eighteen merchant vessels, were given up to the English.

DOMESTIC.—For several days past, his Majesty has been indisposed by a rheumatism in his right foot, occasioned, it is said, by his having overheated himself in hunting: the violence of this complaint varied from day to day, for some time he was too ill to admit any visitants; but he is now so far recovered as to ride out on horseback.—From all parts of the country, there are accounts of discontents and disagreements among the volunteer corps, but the instances are too numerous to be de-

tailed in this paper.—At Chester, a Court of Inquiry has been instituted by the Lord Lieutenant of the county, on the subject of the disturbances, which were stated in a preceding sheet, to have taken place in that city; and a reward of one hundred pounds has been offered by the King, and another of one hundred and fifty pounds by the magistrates of the city, for the discovery of the persons concerned in the late attack upon the gaol of that place.—

—The Gazette of the 14th instant, announces the appointment of the right hon. William Windham to be Lieutenant Colonel Commandant of the fourth battalion of Norfolk volunteer infantry.—The King has been pleased to appoint Lieutenant-General William Myers to be Commander of his Majesty's forces serving in the Windward and Leeward Charibbee Island station.—He has, also, been pleased to present the Rev. John M'Ewen to the church and parish of Baldernock, in the county of Stirling, vacant by the promotion of Dr. James Cowper to the Professorship of Astronomy in the university of Glasgow.—He has, also, been pleased to grant to Samuel Lysons, of the Inner Temple, Esq. the office of Keeper of the Rolls and Records of the Court of Chancery, in the Tower of London, in the room of Thomas Astle, Esq. deceased.—He has, also, been pleased to grant the dignity of a Baronet of the United Kingdom of Great-Britain and Ireland to Charles Price, of Spring Grove, Richmond, in the county of Surrey, Esq. and to the heirs male of his body lawfully begotten.—At a court at the Queen's palace, the 10th of January, 1804, present the King's Most Excellent Majesty in council. The right hon. Sir Evan Nepean, Bart. was, by his Majesty's command, sworn of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council, and took his place at the board accordingly.—Lord Cornwallis has been appointed to the military command of the districts of Suffolk and Essex.

MILITARY.—Great uncertainty prevails among all the accounts which have been received, relative to the military operations on the Continent. It is said that General Berthier, with another large body of French troops, had been ordered to leave Hanover, and reinforce the armies collecting in Holland; and that occasional detachments will be sent off in like manner, until the whole force in the Electorate will be reduced to a few regiments, who will occupy the country, under General Mortier, until the conclusion of the war. It is also said that a new requisition of one

thousand horses, for the service of France, has just been made, and that an additional tax of three per cent. on all public salaries, and landed estates, and two per cent. on all other descriptions of property has been imposed, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the French troops.—Respecting the troops in Holland and those at and near Flushing, nothing new has been communicated to the public, but the accounts of their great numbers, and of their complete state of preparation, which have been so often repeated and so often contradicted, are again repeated.—The army assembled in the neighbourhood of Boulogne is said to be immense, and its numbers vary in the different relations, from sixty to an hundred and thirty thousand men, all of whom are reported to be ready for immediate embarkation.—General Augereau who collected an army at Bayonne, intended as it was supposed for overawing Portugal, has it seems arrived at Brest, where between thirty and forty thousand men, are waiting only for the completion of the naval part of the expedition, to be embarked for the invasion.—The body of Italian troops which is to take part in the enterprise against England, and which was stated in a former sheet, to have passed through Geneva on their route to the coasts of the Channel; have reached St. Omers, where they were inspected and reviewed by the Chief Consul. French troops from Mantua and its environs have been sent to replace them, in different parts of Italy.

NAVAL.—The accounts of the naval preparations in the ports of the French and Batavian republics, are so contradictory that very little reliance can be placed upon the statements which they give. There is no reason to believe, however, that the preparations in either have suffered any abatement; but, on the contrary it is asserted, that since the arrival of Admiral Verheul at Flushing, the building and equipment of boats, both there, and in the neighbouring parts of the republic, have been carried on with increased vigour.—Since the late visit of the First Consul to Boulogne, equal zeal has been exerted among those concerned in fitting out the flotillas, there and at the subordinate dépôts of naval preparation; and it is said, that upwards of seven hundred boats are almost ready to come out.—The Brest fleet is also said to be prepared for sailing, and waits only for a favourable opportunity to put to sea.—The armaments in the port of Toulon are carried on with great activity, but the fleet which is perfectly ready to sail, is

unable to elude the blockade of Lord Nelson.—A small flotilla of armed ships and a flotilla, are said to have left Marseilles, with twelve hundred troops on board; the destination of which is yet unknown.—These accounts of extraordinary preparations in so many of the enemy's ports might perhaps be doubted, were they not daily reported by the ministerial newspapers, and were it not known that the ministers are, themselves, in daily expectation that an attempt will be made, to invade the country.—Commodore Hood, in a letter to the Admiralty states that on the 29th of November, a French battery, at Cape de Saleres in the island of Martinique, was attacked by great part of the marines of the Centaur, under Capt. Corosier, and fifty seamen under Lieut. Maurice and Ayscough, which he had landed for the purpose, and that from the rapid movements of the assailants, the enemy was thrown into confusion, and the battery consisting of six twenty-four pounders fell into their hands, and was completely destroyed. By the explosion of a magazine one of Com. Hood's men was killed, and a few were wounded. On the same day they destroyed another battery of three forty-two pounders near the same place.—Capt. Graves, in a letter to Com. Hood, states, that on the 16th of November, the boats of the Blenheim and the Drake, with sixty men, under Capt. Ferris, cut out the French privateer, Harmonie, from Marin in the Bay of St. Anne, Martinique: the privateer mounted eight guns, and was manned with sixty-six men, great part of whom were killed or wounded in the engagement. Of Capt. G.'s men only one was killed and a few were wounded.—At the same time a detachment of sixty marines, under Lieut. Beatie, surprised and took Fort Dunkirk, the guns of which they spiked, and destroyed all the ammunition and stores.—Between the 23d of July and the 20th of November, the squadron under Com. Hood, captured nine French privateers, and eight French and six Dutch merchant vessels, and retook six English, and detained or retook five American, two Spanish, and three Swedish vessels.—Sir J. T. Duckworth, in a letter dated Port-Royal, Jamaica, on the 19th of November states the destruction of two French privateers, one by Lieut. Foley of the Gipsy, and the other by Capt. Roberts of the Snake.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

AMERICA.—The "safe politicians" of the American administration have, at last,

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notwithstanding all the humanity and philanthropy of their chief, Mr. Jefferson, brought that country to the very verge of a war with her Spanish neighbours. Circular Letters were written on the 31st of October last, by the Secretary at War to the governors of Tennessee, Kentucky, Ohio, and the Mississippi territory, stating that "there being reason to suspect that the officers of the Spanish government may decline or refuse to give possession of the country of Louisiana, ceded to the United States by the French Republic, and which congress have by law authorised the President to take possession of, and the President having judged it expedient to pursue such measures as will ensure the possession, he has therefore been directed by the President of the United States to request their excellencies to assemble, with the least possible delay, their respective quotas of troops," (amounting, in the whole, to about seven thousand men) "and to have them in readiness to march on an expedition of four months, by the 20th of December at farthest." Thus, after having purchased the colony of France, and actually created stock for the amount of the purchase money, the United States are compelled to obtain possession by force of arms. The opposition of Spain commenced as soon as the cession was formally announced to the world, and the Spanish minister at the city of Washington, in conformity to the directions of his court, presented an early remonstrance to the American administration, against it. The ground of this remonstrance is said to be the invalidity of the title of the French Republic, to the ceded territory, in consequence of the non-performance, on her part, of the stipulations of the treaty of St. Idelfonso. The only right which France pretends to have to Louisiana, is acknowledged by the 1st. art. * of the treaty of cession to America, to be derived from the 3d. art. of the treaty of St. Idelfonso, in which article, "his Catholic Majesty promises to cede that colony to the French Republic, six months after the full and entire execution of the conditions and stipulations herein relative to his Royal Highness the Duke of Parma." These conditions and stipulations having never been fully and entirely executed, the Spanish government, denies the right of the French Republic, and consequently the validity of the cession to the United States; and her agents at New Orleans have therefore expressed their determination to retain possession of the country.

* See the treaty at p. 231. of Vol. IV.

Thus "the favourable and peaceable turn of affairs on the Mississippi *," of which Mr. Jefferson boasted in his message at the opening of congress, has led to "the bloody arena†," where the anxious combatants are preparing for battle.—Throughout all the measures of the American administration, relative to Louisiana, from the first communication made to congress respecting the seclusion from New Orleans, to the orders issued for levying troops to take possession of it, its conduct has been marked with low cunning and inconsistency. When, in violation of the treaty concluded between America and Spain in 1794, the right of deposit at New Orleans was taken away from the Americans, without the assignment of any other place; when, in consequence of this outrage, the trade of the Western States was ruined and the crops had rotted in the store-houses of the farmers, and the whole nation had become indignant, then it was that Mr. Jefferson modestly informed the congress that these "*irregularities*" arose entirely from "certain unauthorised individuals," and that he did not doubt of their being immediately disavowed by the Spanish government, when representations had been made of them. It was alledged, in opposition to this, that the Intendant had stated in his proclamation, that he acted by order of the King; and numerous instances were adduced of the hostile disposition of the Court of Madrid, to countenance the belief that the declaration of the Intendant was true. Mr. Jefferson would pursue none but pacific measures; when justice and policy called for war, the interests of "*humanity*" called for negotiation.—Now, nothing is so proper or so wise as war. Spain asserts that France had no right to the country which she pretends to have sold to America, but declares it to be hers, and avows her intention not to yield it. This avowal is made by the same persons, and in the same manner as the former order for suspending the right of deposit at New Orleans. But we hear nothing now of "unauthorised agents," and of the redress which will be immediately granted by the government of Spain. Mr. Jefferson does not tell congress of the hopes he entertains of the difference being amicably adjusted by negotiation, but directs the Secretary at War to call out the army, and prepares to enforce the rights of his country, by the bayonet. Where is now his "philanthropy?" If the conduct of the govern-

* See Mr. Jefferson's Message to Congress at p. 890 of Vol. IV.

† Ibid. p. 891.

ment of New Orleans might, at one time, be supposed unauthorised, why may it not at another? If friendly representation was so powerful in the former case, why should it be thought ineffectual in this? The secret cause of this apparent inconsistency, is France. To each and to all the "enlightened governments" * of that country, Mr. Jefferson has been invariably attached, and this attachment to the sister republic appears not to have been more constant than his animosity to Great Britain. His whole life has been devoted to aiding in the aggrandizement of the one and in the humiliation of the other, and he has always been supported by that party in America, which amidst all their love of change, have never swerved from their devotion to France and their hatred of Great Britain. Contrary to all the true friends of America, his party are known to think that the ruin of England and the prosperity of France are necessary to the general happiness of all countries and among others, of their own. It was this unnatural attachment, which induced them to submit tamely, and without complaining, to the greatest and most wanton injuries and insults from a race, whom the American people might, without difficulty, have driven into the sea. It was because Spain was the ally of France that this party prostrated before her the interest and honour of their country; and it is to aid in the projects of France that they are now about to commence an unjustifiable attack upon the territory of Spain. It was this attachment to France, which induced them to make a purchase of a country which they knew she had no right to sell, in order that they might add thirteen millions of dollars to her treasury, and give her commercial preferences in the ports of America, which they knew to be incompatible with her rival's interests, and would be, at the same time, an endless cause for dissatisfactions and bickerings between America and Great-Britain. In making this purchase, it can hardly be supposed that Mr. Jefferson's attachment to "the enlightened government of France" could have so blinded him as to make him neglect to inquire whether the country he was about to purchase, really belonged to those who offered it for sale. If he sanctioned the treaty without knowing whether Spain would surrender the country, he is really no wiser than an Addington or a Hawkesbury. That, however, is a thing not to be supposed; he knew the precise nature of the right which

France had to Louisiana; and he appears to have made the bargain, not so much for the sake of obtaining Louisiana, as of rendering France the substantial benefits which she will obtain by the stipulations of the treaty. Louisiana, if it be the intention of the American administration to persist in requiring it, must be acquired in the same manner, and by the same means as if no treaty had ever been made, partly by the threats of France and America, and partly by some advantages which America will promise her, in the bargain which she is now making for the Floridas: meanwhile France will have gained thirteen millions of dollars, and the exclusive privilege of sending her produce and manufactures to the ceded country, without paying any higher duties, than are paid by the Americans themselves; and these thirteen millions of dollars will have been advanced by British loan-mongers, and will have formed a new bond of British subjection to the will of America, because the owners of this stock will always be for yielding, in all cases whatsoever, to the demands of Mr. Jefferson and his party, to which demands imagination is scarcely able to set bounds. The *true* interests of America and of England are, as far as the two countries are connected, not only perfectly compatible with each other; but, it is impossible that those of one nation should materially suffer without injuring those of the other. This was the maxim upon which General Washington always proceeded: it is the maxim, on which the real friends of the United States now proceed, and on which they always must proceed, in opposition to those who, led by a band of British, Irish and Genevean renegadoes, are, in all cases, ready to sacrifice the honour and interest of their country to the views of France.

FRENCH EXPOSÉ. — The annual *Exposé* of the First Consul to the Legislative Body, is too long to be inserted in the present sheet; but, it will certainly have a place in the next. It must, of course, be considered as a very important document; for, though its statements are to be received with great allowances, yet they cannot but enable us to form some judgment of the real situation of our rival and enemy. A ministerial print has, indeed, observed, since the appearance of the *Exposé*, that its financial representations will, upon being compared with a statement published in that print a few days before, "be found to be *totally false*;" but, the worst of it is, we are furnished with no proof, that the said counter-statement is *true*; and, though there can be little doubt of Buonaparte's

* See Mr. Jefferson's Message to Congress at p. 88 of Vol. IV.

having, in every particular, turned, as the saying is, "the best side towards London," there is, on the other hand, no reason to presume, that any of his statements are more exaggerated or deceptive than those of Mr. Addington; and, that the pecuniary resources of the latter must be first exhausted, it were infatuation, indeed, not to believe. Buonaparté has, through the political baseness and the feebleness of this country, or its ministers, the command of all the treasures of Spain and Portugal, and of the produce of the industry of Holland, while he is absolutely selling the electorate of Hanover piece-meal; and, if he retains possession of it much longer, nine-tenths of the real as well as personal property will have changed masters; for, he has learned of the English financiers how to take away house and land without acts of attainder or confiscation.—There is one point in the *Exposé*, which merits particular attention. It is that where the Consul positively denies the fact, relative to armaments on the coast, as stated in his Majesty's message of the 8th of March, 1803.* As far as that allegation went, the ground of hostile preparation on our part, was, most assuredly false; and this falsehood, from having been, by the ministers, put into a communication from the King to the Parliament, has given the enemy a handle to throw upon us the whole weight of aggression, and of waging war upon false pretences. His Majesty is made to say, that, "as very considerable military preparations are carrying on in the ports of France and Holland, he has judged it expedient to adopt additional measures of precaution for the security of his dominions." The statement, with regard to these armaments is now positively denied by the First Consul; and, indeed, the denial was made long ago, and much more circumstantially, in a writing which evidently came from authority, and which was circulated in company with the *Moniteur*, in every part of Europe and of the world. Our ministers were then repeatedly called upon to justify themselves and the country; but, of all the thousands and thousands, which they have bestowed on the press, not a shilling could be spared for a purpose so great as this. The truth is, they had uttered a falsehood, and it was impossible to make it appear true; but, the country has thereby lost its character for sincerity and fair dealing; suspicions have been excited against us, in the breasts of every sovereign and of every people in Europe; and

we are, as we ought to be, whilst these ministers remain unpunished, left without a single friend in the world, either potentate or private individual, except such as are base enough to be purchased with our money. We now feel, and we shall yet feel much more severely, what it is to have forfeited our honour. We shall feel, that, without national honour, "capital, credit, and confidence" are of little avail, and can, at best, only serve to eke out, for a short space, a miserable and disgraceful existence.

ST. DOMINGO. — If the news from this island be correct: if the reported evacuation of the island, by the French general and his troops, be true, as it apparently is, the case anticipated by Mr. Windham now actually exists. "Great doubt," said he in a note to his speech of 4th November, 1801, "great doubt seems to be entertained, at this moment, whether France will, or will not, finally obtain possession of St. Domingo; and, great exultation appears to be felt, in consequence, by those who, a few months ago, upon the ground that the conquest of St. Domingo by France was necessary for the security of our own islands, had consented to so extraordinary a measure as sending out an immense armament, from the enemy's ports, in the interval between the preliminary and definitive treaties. The probability is, that France will succeed, so far, at least, as to keep possession of part of the island; but, *should she not*, then all the terms affected to be felt at the establishment of 'a Black Empire' will return with ten-fold force; for the blacks will remain masters, and masters after having tried their powers in a regular contest with European troops, not to mention the hostility which they may well be suspected to conceive against us, who, after various treaties and negotiations, finally lent our assistance to the sending out of a force intended for the purpose of bringing them back to slavery*." Here is the present state of affairs, with respect to St. Domingo, exactly described. The dreaded Black Empire is revived, and, undoubtedly, with a determination, on the part of its rulers, never again to trust to English faith; that faith which was formerly so sacredly preserved, but which the Addingtons and Hawkesburies have reduced to a level with that of the lowest and most perfidious nations. The public cannot have forgotten, that the conquest and safe

* See the message, Register, Vol. III. p. 403.

* See Register, Vol. II. p. 1157.

possession of St. Domingo by the French was, by all the ministers, held out as being absolutely necessary to the preservation of our own islands from the dominion of the negroes. In the debate of March 4th, 1802, Lord Castlereagh said, that "it must be apparent, if we looked to the state of the French colonies, that it must be equally the policy of this country and of France, that those colonies should be subjected to *their former government* *." In the debate of the 14th of May, 1802, he said: "If I were called upon to say, what would have the greatest effect in restoring our influence on the continent of Europe, I would say, that it would be giving back to France her colonial possessions. Let her commerce be revived, let her colonies be cultivated, and our interest will proportionably increase †." Next comes the sagacious Doctor with his speech of the 3d of May, 1802: "Looking at the state of our West-India islands, I am confident, that whether they are viewed in a national way, or upon the narrower field of individual interest, it will be manifest, that the usurpation of the Black Government, is the most formidable of all apprehensions for the safety of those possessions ‡." Colonel Maitland brings up the rear; Colonel Maitland famed at St. Domingo, not less for his diplomatic than for his military deeds. "Though," says he, "we have, by the war, got rid of the revolutionary spirit in Europe, we have not, thereby, attained that end to the colonies. We have, however, got a better chance of producing that effect by the peace, than we could have had by any other means that we could have employed. An honourable member has alluded to the case of a free republic, or, as he should call it, with more justice, a free anarchy of blacks, being established in St. Domingo. This would be the greatest evil that could happen. If the French did get the better of the existing state of affairs in their West-India islands, then, it might be said, another kind of danger would arise. True, but that danger would be of a legitimate kind, and one against which we could apply precautions §." So that, according to the opinions here expressed by the wise-acre ministers and their partisans, they have lately been lending their hand; they have been employing a very considerable squadron, at the expense, perhaps, of the lives of a thousand or fifteen hundred seamen, for the purpose of bringing

about what they themselves had declared to be "the greatest of evils;" the "most formidable of all apprehensions for the safety of our possessions;" a danger "against which we can supply no precautions!" Yet, would the man deserve to be chalked down for an egregious dupe, who should be surprized at hearing them boast of their success at St. Domingo.—The French are still in possession of the Spanish part of the island; and, from that they will not easily be dislodged. Indeed no attempt will be made against them by the negroes in the French part; and, it shall be hard but they will contrive, by some means or other to stimulate the blacks in the French part to assist in any project which they may form hostile to our colonies. Now their object is devastation; purely devastation. They have nothing of their own, in the West-Indies, which, viewed in conjunction with their European policy, is worth preserving. What need they care, if all the islands were in the hands of the blacks? Nay, have they not every reason to wish it, seeing that it would produce such dreadful mischief to us? They have a strong hold at Martinico, from whence to send their commissaries, as occasions may offer; and, it is not very probable, that either that island or Guadaloupe will fall into our hands, while neutral ships are suffered to trade to them; for, we have not troops to attack those places. St. Pierre and Point à Petre are both well fortified, and are not commanded by men, who leave their posts occasionally, in order to loiter and talk treason in the United States of America. They serve an usurper; yet, were they shewn a picture representing Fame putting a crown on even his head, they have, I dare say, too high a sense of fidelity, to express delight at the idea of her being in the act of taking off the crown instead of putting it on. No, no; the commandants of St. Pierre and Point à Petre will not leave their armies to perish ingloriously behind their ramparts, while they themselves are making a tour amongst the detestable democrats of Pennsylvania and New York, paying their court by the most infamous slanders on their country and their master, and afterwards returning home to cringe at the feet, spaniel-like to lick the hand, to solicit, to beg, to implore, and, finally, to obtain favours from that master, and to fatten upon the miseries of that calumniated country. No; Buonaparté is more faithfully served, and for this reason,—that he takes care to distinguish his friends from his enemies.

VOLUNTEER SYSTEM.—In the former

* Register, Vol. II. p. 1194.

† Ibid, p. 1337. ‡ Ibid, p. 1212.

§ Ibid, p. 1338.

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part of this sheet, will be found several documents, relative to this subject, on the authenticity of all which reliance may be placed, though the names, have, at the request of my correspondents, been, in some cases, omitted.—Upon the perusal of these documents, what soldier is not ready to exclaim with the Admiral de Coligny, in my motto, “rather than lead an army of *volunteers* into the field, I would *die a thousand deaths?*” Indeed, the system is in direct hostility to reason, to nature, and to experience. In all ages and in all countries has it been found absolutely necessary to govern military men by military law. The son is bound to the father by the ties of affection; the servant to the master, by those of dependence for food and raiment; the subject to the Sovereign, by those of the law: but, in this volunteer system there are no ties at all; there is nothing to insure obedience, while there is every temptation to disobedience. The man, the volunteer, as he is called, enters on the performance of new, painful, and irksome duties; a greater degree of patience and submission is required from him than he ever before has practised; to this task he comes leaving behind him all those motives of affection and of interest, by which alone he has heretofore been stimulated to perform and endure; and, in this state it is, that he is expected to act his part well, not only without martial law, but without any law at all; for, as far as relates to his duties, in the capacity of a volunteer, there is *no law* by which he is bound. Whatever, therefore, the ministers may do by way of amending, improving, or new-modelling the system, the radical evil will remain, unless every man, for the time, at least, that he is called out in a military capacity, for however short a space, and for whatever purpose; unless every man, so called out, is, for the time, put under *martial law*, every change, every attempt at improvement, will be, if not totally useless, at least, very far from producing the desired effect.—The system, indeed, as it now stands, cannot be suffered to exist. It does not, in fact, any longer exist. The volunteers are only waiting for the decision of Parliament, or of the Court of King’s Bench, to know what they shall do with themselves. They are wearied to death with the useless mockery, on which they have been induced to expend so much of their money and their time. The whole nation are tired of these shews, this playing at soldiers, and every one asks,

how this mummery is to contribute towards putting an end to the war? The people ask for an army, a real and numerous army: they want repose; they beg to be relieved from the never-ceasing vexation of enrolling and ballotting and drafting and summoning and appealing; they say to the government, “make some of us *soldiers* at once, or take our money and find us an army.”—It has been from the paltry consideration of economy, or rather, of the popularity which arises from a shew of economy, that the volunteer system has sprung. But, few persons are so blind as not now to perceive, that an army of volunteers while it is, comparatively, useless, is nearly as expensive as a regular army, under whose guardianship the people might sleep in tranquillity. Some miserable attempt will, however, in all probability, be made to prop up the existence of the system for a little longer; another crude and unintelligible bill will, most probably, be past; a bill to “consolidate the Volunteer Acts,” that is to say, to bring into one solid mass all the contradictory, all the hampering and puzzling, and harrassing provisions, that are now scattered through four or five acts. But, all such attempts will be in vain: down the system must come: the evils which would grow out of a patching of it up, would be much more dangerous and more difficult to cure than any that have yet appeared: it is radically vicious, containing within itself the means and the motives of national destruction, and, therefore, the sooner it is done away the better. Any measure, intended to preserve it, by way of improvement, will only make it more strong, and, of course, more dangerous. It is a system of *military democracy*. The democratical ingredient in it is so powerful, that it must, in a short time, subdue all the others, and bring the whole system to the attack of the monarchy, which, I repeat it again and again, “*cannot not long co-exist with this system.*”—And here, the public will recollect, how often, how outrageously, how scandalously, I have, by the slaves of the ministry, been abused for having advanced this opinion. Indeed, *all* the newspapers, and not only the newspapers, but the magazines and other periodical works, not excepting those of the solemn and sapient reviewers, however widely they might differ from each other as to other points, all agreed in reprobating my sentiments upon the volunteer system, which some of them regarded as being little short of *treasonable*. But, now behold, these sentiments are adopted, almost to the full

extent, by a vast majority of the country, including the ministers themselves. I claim no merit in having foreseen the consequences of the system, for they were obvious: every man in his senses must have foreseen them; but, every man, who had an opportunity, had not the inclination to oppose the favourite folly of the time.—To advert any more to particular instances of the quarrels in volunteer corps seem useless, at a time, when those quarrels are ringing in our ears from every quarter of the country, nay from every town and parish, which is so unfortunate as to contain a corps of “defenders.” But, as a statement of the expenses of the Mary-le-bonne Volunteers is inserted in a former part of this sheet, it is almost impossible to refrain from mentioning here a circumstance that will serve to show the degree of good, which, in a military point of view, is likely to result from those expenses. It was stated in the public prints of yesterday, “that Lieut. Colonel Boyce attended “at the Police Office in Marlborough “Street, in the room of Colonel Lord Viscount Duncannon, the Commandant of the “Royal York Mary-le-bonne Volunteers, “in order to lay a complaint against several “members of that corps, for absence from duty “and non-payment of their fines. After “that gentleman had stated generally the “inconvenience occasioned by the irregular attendance of the members of Volunteer Corps, and what he conceived to “be the spirit of the resolutions which “their corps in particular had agreed to,— “the case first examined was a certificate “from a surgeon, declaring the party’s “inability to attend, was produced and sworn “to; of course he was discharged from “any penalty.—One of them stated his “wish to resign, as the duty of the corps “interfered with his other business. He was “willing to pay the sum for which he was “called upon, as a subscription along with “others, but did not like paying a fine.— “The Magistrate, after some remarks on “the engagements of the Volunteers and “the object for which they had come “forward, recommended the parties to “make it up in a friendly way.—The “suggestion of the Magistrate was agreed “to, and other members of the corps also “consented to make up the matter with their “colonel, Lord Viscount Duncannon.”—So, here is another principle starting up. The magistrates decline to decide! They have decided *heretofore*, in such cases,

and at this very Police-Office, too. Why do they not decide now? There has been no new law passed, relative to the subject, subsequent to their former decisions. Why not continue to decide, then? What a scene is here! Lieutenant Colonels and their soldiers appearing before Police Magistrates to ask an audience, amidst crowds of thief-takers, informers, bawds, and bullies; to prefer their complaints and recriminations; and to listen to advice such as that which is given to man and wife, whose domestic harmony has been disturbed by the influence of gin! “The magistrate “recommended the parties to make it up.” Just the very words that are made use of in describing the cause of an accommodation between a brutal blackguard and a wench to whom he has given a black-eye. Good heavens! What a degradation of military titles and of the profession of a soldier! Is it thus; is it *thus* that we are to be made “a military people!”

Want of room prevents me from inserting some remarks upon the *state of parties*, and upon the debate on the *Middlesex petition*, which latter I cannot delay to observe, however, ought not, in my opinion, to have been admitted. One of the great evils of the present day is, that the letter of the law is, on all occasions, giving way to what is called “*equitable construction*,” than which a more dangerous symptom, a symptom more directly threatening the destruction of real liberty and of lawful government, cannot possibly be conceived.

The readers of the Register will hear, with great pleasure, that his Majesty has been graciously pleased to grant, under his Royal Sign Manuel, a pension of £20 a year for life to the gallant ANTOINE LUTZ, of the Queen’s German regiment of foot, who took the *Invincible Standard*, in the battle of Alexandria, on the 21st of March, 1801.

Correspondents may be assured, that their communications will all be noticed, if not inserted at length, in the next sheet.

No. I to 8 inclusive, of COBBETT’S PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES, containing a faithful report of the whole of the proceedings of Parliament, from the opening of the session to the Christmas recess, may be had of the publishers of the Register. No. 9, containing the Debate on the Middlesex Election Petition, &c. &c. will be published in a few days.